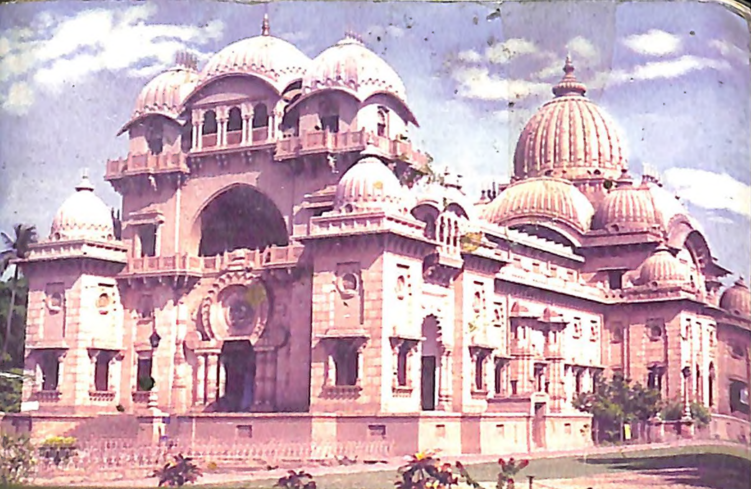


GREAT SAYINGS

Words of

Sri Ramakrishna
Sarada Devi
and
Swami Vivekananda



GREAT SAYINGS



THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION INSTITUTE OF CULTURE

Gol Park, Kolkata 700 029

Published by
Swami Sarvabhutananda
Secretary
Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture
Gol Park, Kolkata 700 029

ISBN 81-85843-82-1

First Published : January 1989 : 5,000
Fifteenth Print : February 2009 : 25,000
Total Impression : 4,25,000

Printed at

Trio Process
P-128, C.I.T. Road
Entally, Scheme L-2
Kolkata - 700 014

o *A Value Orientation Publication*

Preface

Sri Ramakrishna taught no creed or dogma, he taught only Truth, which he also called God. The highest thing man can achieve in life, is according to him, attainment of a moral and spiritual level where he can never deviate from what he knows to be Truth. This attainment is also marked by a feeling of oneness with every being on earth. At this point, man's centre of existence is 'everywhere and circumference nowhere'. This is what is called God-realization or self-realization ; it is also known as liberation or salvation.

Following in his steps, both Sri Sri Sarada Devi and Swami Vivekananda preached the same ideal. In these pages, words of the trio are given for the benefit of those who are not able to go to the larger sources.

Swami Lokeswarananda

12 January 1989

Preface to the third edition

'Great Sayings' was first published in 1989. The book has undergone several reprints since then, which attests to its popularity. We are now presenting the book in a new format. The readers will find it more handy. We are also giving a photo of Sri Ramakrishna, Sarada Devi and Swami Vivekananda with the book. Hope, with these added features, the book will be ever more popular.

Swami Lokeswarananda

12 October 1996

SAYINGS OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

You see many stars in the sky at night, but not when the sun rises. Can you therefore say that there are no stars in the heavens during the day ? O man, because you cannot find God in the days of your ignorance, say not that there is no God. □

Man suffers so much simply for want of devotion to God. One should therefore adopt such means as would help the thought of God to arise in the mind at the last moment of one's life. The means is practice of devotion to God. □

There are pearls in the deep sea, but you must hazard all perils to get them. If you fail to get at them by a single dive, do not conclude that the sea is without them. Dive again and again, and you are sure to be rewarded in the end. So also in the quest for the Lord, if your first attempt to see Him proves fruitless, do not lose heart. □

...It is the power of Brahman in man that causes the mind and the intellect and the senses to perform their functions; and when that power ceases to act, these also stop work. □

A man who spends his time in discussing the good and bad qualities of others simply wastes his own time. For it

is time spent neither in thinking about one's own self nor about the Supreme Self, but in fruitless thinking of others' selves. □

Be not a traitor to your thoughts. Be sincere; act according to your thoughts; and you shall surely succeed. Pray with a sincere and simple heart, and your prayers will be heard. □

One is safe to live in the world, if one has Viveka (discrimination of the Real from the unreal), and Vairagya (dispassion), and along with these intense devotion to God. □

The magnetic needle always points to the North, and hence it is that the sailing

vessel does not lose her direction. So long as the heart of man is directed towards God, he cannot be lost in the ocean of worldliness. □

He is a true man who is dead even in this life—that is, whose passions and propensities have been curbed to extinction as in a dead body. □

Seekest thou God ? Then see Him in man; His Divinity is manifest more in man than in any other object. Man is the greatest manifestation of God. □

Look at the anvil of a blacksmith—how it is hammered and beaten; yet it moves not from its place. Let men learn patience and endurance from it. □

One can ascend to the top of a house by means of a ladder or a bamboo or a staircase or a rope; so too, diverse are the ways of approaching God and each religion in the world shows one of the ways. □

In this age work without devotion to God has no legs to stand upon. It is like a foundation on sand. First cultivate devotion. All other things—schools, dispensaries, etc.—will, if you like, be added to you. First devotion, then work. Work, apart from devotion or love of God, is helpless and cannot stand. □

If you say, 'I am a sinner', eternally, you will remain a sinner to all eternity. You ought rather to repeat, 'I am not

bound, I am not bound. Who can bind me ? I am son of God, the King of kings'. □

He who thinks that he is a Jiva, verily remains as a Jiva; but he who considers himself to be God, verily becomes a God. As one thinks, so does one become. □

Do not let worldly thoughts and anxieties disturb your mind. □

Purify the spectacles of your mind, and you will see that the world is God. □

As the dawn heralds the Sun, so sincerity, unselfishness, purity and righteousness precede the advent of the Lord. □

The more is a man's attachment to the world, the less is he likely to attain Knowledge. The less his attachment to the world, the more is the probability of his gaining Knowledge. □

Give up everything to Him, resign yourself to Him, and there will be no more trouble for you. Then you will come to know that everything is done by His will. □

Meditate on God either in an obscure corner, or in the solitude of forests, or within the silent sanctuary of your own heart. □

If you must be mad, be it not for the things of the world. Be mad with the love of God. □

As soft clay easily takes an impression, but not hard stone, so also Divine wisdom impresses itself on the heart of a devotee, but not on a bound soul. □

The ego that asserts, 'I am the servant of God' is the characteristic of the true devotee. It is the ego of Vidya (Knowledge), and is called the 'ripe' ego. □

The companionship of the holy and the wise is one of the main elements of spiritual progress. □

That knowledge which purifies the mind and heart alone is true Knowledge, all else is only a negation of Knowledge. □

Water is dried up at once if poured on a heap of ashes. Vanity is like this heap of ashes. Prayer and contemplation produce no effect upon the heart puffed up with vanity. □

He alone is the true teacher who is illumined by the light of true Knowledge. □

Sugar and sand may be mixed together, but the ant rejects the sand and carries away the grains of sugar. So the holy Paramahamsas and pious men successfully sift the good from the bad. □

Wherein is the strength of a devotee ? He is a child of God, and his

devotional tears are his mightiest weapon. □

The spiritually minded belong to a caste of their own, beyond all social conventions. □

He alone enters the Kingdom of Heaven who is not a thief of his own thought. In other words, guilelessness and simple faith are the roads to that Kingdom. □

Women whether naturally good or not, whether chaste or unchaste, should always be regarded as images of the Blissful Divine Mother. □

Don't find fault with anyone, not even with an insect. As you pray to God for

devotion, so also pray that you may not find fault with anyone. □

Dispute not. As you rest firmly on your own faith and opinion, allow others also equal liberty to stand by their own faith and opinion. □

It is said that truthfulness alone constitutes the spiritual practice of the Kali Yuga (i.e. modern age). If a man clings tenaciously to truth, he ultimately realizes God. □

Visit not miracle-mongers and those who exhibit occult powers. These men are stragglers from the path of Truth. □

If there is a small hole at the bottom of a jar of water, the whole water will

leak out. Similarly, if there is the smallest tinge of worldliness in the aspirant, all his exertions will come to naught. □

The soiled mirror never reflects the rays of the sun; similarly those who are impure and unclean at heart and are deluded by Maya never perceive the glory of the Lord. But the pure in heart see the Lord as the clear mirror reflects the sun. □

Money can fetch you bread alone. Do not consider it as your sole end and aim. □

He is truly a man to whom money is only a servant; but, on the other hand, those who do not know how to make a proper use of it, hardly deserve to be called men. □

The sun can give heat and light to the whole world, but he cannot do so when the clouds shut out his rays. Similarly, as long as egotism veils the heart, God cannot shine upon it. □

The young bamboo can be easily bent, but the full grown bamboo breaks when it is bent with force. It is easy to bend the young heart towards God, but the untrained heart of the old escapes the hold whenever it is so drawn. □

Men are of two classes—men in name only (Manush) and the awakened men (Man-hunsh). Those who thirst after God alone belong to the latter class; those who are mad after 'woman and gold' are all ordinary men—men in name only. □

Rain water never stands on high ground, but runs down to the lowest level. So also the mercy of God remains in the hearts of the lowly, but drains off from those of the vain and the proud. □

Those who wish to attain God or make progress in their devotional practices should particularly guard themselves against the snares of lust and wealth. Otherwise they can never attain perfection. □

Do you talk of social reform ? Well, you may do so after realizing God. Remember, the Rishis of old gave up the world in order to attain God. This is the one thing needful. All other things shall be added to you, if indeed you care to

have them. First see God, and then talk of lectures and social reforms. □

The true nature of the Jiva is eternal Existence-Knowledge-Bliss. It is due to egotism, that he is limited by so many Upadhis (limiting adjuncts), and has forgotten his real nature. □

If you can find out the nature of Maya, the universal illusion, it will fly away from you just as a thief runs away when detected. □

The cat catches her kitten with her teeth and they are not hurt; but when a mouse is so caught, it dies. Thus Maya never kills the devotee, though it destroys others. □

He is born in vain, who having attained the human birth, so difficult to get, does not attempt to realize God in this very life. □

Jiva is Shiva (all living beings are God). Who then dare talk of showing mercy to them ? Not mercy, but service, service. For man must be regarded as God. □

Let me be condemned to be born over and over again, even in the form of a dog, if so I can be of help to a single soul. □

As a piece of rope, when burnt, retains its form, but cannot serve to bind, so is the ego which is burnt by the fire of supreme Knowledge. □

A truly religious man should think that other religions are also many paths leading to the Truth. One should always maintain an attitude of respect towards other religions. □

Every man should follow his own religion. A Christian should follow Christianity, and a Mohammedan Mohammedanism. For the Hindu, the ancient path, the path of the Aryan Rishis, is the best. □

I will give up twenty thousand such bodies to help one man. It is glorious to help even one man. □

A boat may stay in water, but water should not stay in the boat. An aspirant

may live in the world, but the world should not live within him. □

Do everything that is necessary in the proper time, and let your mind be always fixed on God. □

All religions are true. God can be reached by different religions. Many rivers flow by many ways but they fall into the sea. There all are one. □

The tree laden with fruits always bends low. If you wish to be great, be lowly and meek. □

Be as devoid of vanity as the cast away leaf carried by the high wind. □

God cannot be seen so long as there is the slightest taint of desire. Therefore have your minor desires satisfied, and renounce the major ones through right reasoning and discrimination. □.

SAYINGS OF SARADA DEVI

Sri Ramakrishna left me behind to manifest the Motherhood of God to the world. □

I can't contain myself when one draws near me and calls me Mother. □

Holy men are born on earth to show people the way to God. They teach differently. There are many paths leading to the same goal. Therefore the teachings of all the saints are true. □

The aim of life is to realize God and remain immersed in contemplation of

Him. God alone is real and everything else is false. ☐

One realizes God in proportion to the intensity of one's feeling for Him. He who is really eager to cross the ocean of the world will somehow break his bonds. No one can entangle him. The Master (Sri Ramakrishna) is the embodiment of all deities and of all mantras....Really and truly, one can worship through him all gods and goddesses. ☐

The mind is no better than a wild elephant. It runs with the wind. Therefore one should always discriminate and strive hard for the realization of God. ☐

Practise meditation, and by and by

your mind will be so calm and fixed that you will find it hard to keep away from meditation. □

Whenever the mind goes after anything other than God, consider that as transient and surrender the mind at the sacred feet of the Lord. □

Always remember Sri Ramakrishna's saying that money is at the root of all the disasters you see in the world. Money can lure one's mind into other temptations. Beware. □

It is in the mind alone that one feels pure or impure. A Man first makes his own mind guilty and then sees another's fault. Can you injure anybody by

enumerating his faults ? You only injure yourself. □

To err is human; but how few know to lead an erring man ? □

Do the Master's work, and along with that practise spiritual discipline. Some amount of work keeps the mind free from idle thoughts. □

If one sits alone without any work, various thoughts may come into the mind. □

Everything, no doubt, happens by God's will, yet man must work because God expresses His will through man's action. Do not relax your spiritual practices. □

The chief characteristic of the Master's sadhana was his renunciation. Has anyone ever seen such natural renunciation ? Renunciation is his great ornament. □

How can the devotees really have any caste ? Children are all equal. □

The Master used to say that truthfulness alone is the austerity of the present age. One attains to God by holding to the truth. □

When a man sees defects in others his own mind first gets polluted. What does he gain by finding faults in others ? He only hurts himself by that. □

My child, if you want peace, then do

not look into anybody's faults. Look into your own faults. Learn to make the world your own. No one is a stranger, my child; the whole world is your own. □

If you do not pray to God, what is that to Him ? It is only *your* misfortune. □

Many are known to do great works under the stress of some strong emotion. But a man's true nature is known from the manner in which he does his insignificant daily task. □

Just as clouds are blown away by the wind, so the thirst for material pleasure will be driven away by the utterance of the Lord's name. □

The injunctions of Destiny are cancelled if one takes refuge in God. Destiny has to strike off with her own hand what she has decreed about such a person. □

One must not speak unpleasant truths un-necessarily. By indulging in rude words one's nature becomes rude. One loses sensitivity without control over one's words. □

First offer to God whatever you eat. One must not eat unoffered food. As your food is, so will be your blood. □

An unmarried person is half-free, whether he prays to God or not. He will advance towards Him with rapid strides

when he feels a little drawn towards Him. ☐

One must experience the effect of past action....None can escape it. But japa minimizes its intensity. ☐

If you love a human being, you will have to suffer for it. He is blessed, indeed, who can love God alone. There is no suffering in loving God. ☐

If you practise spiritual discipline for some time in a solitary place, you will find that your mind has become strong, and then you can live in any place or society without being in the least affected by it. ☐

One should not trifle with a thing,

though it may be very insignificant. If you respect a thing, the thing also respects you. Even a broomstick should be treated with respect. One should perform even an insignificant work with respect. □

We should give everyone his due. What is not edible for a man, give to a cow; what is not edible for a cow, give to a dog; what is not edible for a dog, throw into a lake for fishes to eat. But never waste. □

Give up dry discussion, this hotchpotch of philosophy. Who has been able to know God by reasoning ? □

In the fullness of spiritual realization, a person finds that the God who resides in

his heart resides in the hearts of all—the oppressed, the persecuted, the lowly, and the untouchable. This realization makes one truly humble. □

One should desire of God desirelessness. Desire is the obstacle to liberation. □

Those who have come here thinking of the Master will certainly see their Chosen Ideal. If this does not take place at any other time, it will at least come just before their death. □

Misery is truly a gift of God. I believe it is a symbol of His compassion. □

It is idle to expect that dangers and difficulties will not come. They are bound

to come. But, for a devotee they will pass away from under the feet like water. □

There are many, many people who do not even think of God. If they do not call on Him, it is their misfortune. □

No doubt you must do your duties. This keeps your mind in good condition. But it is also necessary to practise japa, meditation, and prayer. □

If my son wallows in the dust or mud, it is me who have to wipe all the dirt off his body and take him to my lap. □

Many think of God only after receiving blows from the world. But blessed indeed is he who can offer his mind, like a fresh flower, at the feet of the

Lord from his very childhood. One should practise renunciation in youth. ☐

Love is our forte. It is through love that the Master's family has taken shape. ☐

Do not be afraid; the Master is behind you, and I am, too, as your Mother. ☐

Today the human body is, tomorrow it is not; even the shortest span of life is beset with pain and misery. He who is able to renounce all for God's sake is a living God. ☐

I am the Mother of the virtuous, I am the Mother of the wicked. Whenever you are in distress, say to yourself : 'I have a mother.' ☐

My son, if a thorn pricks your foot, it hurts me like a spear entering my heart. □

Know that service to your mother is your highest duty. But it is a different matter if she stands in the way of your spiritual progress. □

As long as man has desires, there is no end to his transmigration. It is desires that make him take one body after another. There will be rebirth for a man if he has even the desire to eat a piece of candy. □

Just surrender yourself to Him, you will then feel His grace. □

As you smell the fragrance of a

flower while handling it or the smell of sandalwood while rubbing it against a stone, so you obtain spiritual awakening by constantly thinking of God. If you become desireless you can realize Him right now. □

Only through work can one remove the bondage of work. Total detachment comes later. One should not be without work even for a moment. Work helps one to fend off idle thoughts. □

SAYINGS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

All power is within you, you can do anything and everything. Believe in that, do not believe that you are weak.... You can do anything and everything, without even the guidance of any one. All power is there. Stand up and express the divinity within you.... Arise, Awake, Sleep no more. Within each of you there is the power to remove all wants and all miseries. Believe in this, and that power will be manifested. □

On this basis—being right and doing right—the whole world can unite. □

All expansion is life, all contraction is death. All love is expansion, all selfishness is contraction. Love is therefore the only law of life. He who loves lives, he who is selfish is dying. Therefore love for love's sake, because it is the only law of life, just as you breathe to live. □

The Christian is not to become a Hindu or a Buddhist, nor a Hindu or a Buddhist to become a Christian. But each must assimilate the spirit of the others and yet preserve his individuality and grow according to his own law of growth. □

Take up one idea. Make that one idea your life—think of it, dream of it,

live on that idea. Let the brain, muscles, nerves, every part of your body, be full of that idea, and just leave every other idea alone. This is the way to success. □

Rouse yourselves, therefore, for life is short. There are greater works to be done than aspiring to become lawyers, and picking quarrels, and such things. A far greater work is this sacrifice of yourselves for the benefit of your race, for the welfare of humanity. □

...good motives, sincerity, and infinite love can conquer the world. One single soul possessed of these virtues can destroy the dark designs of millions of hypocrites and brutes : □

Our duty is to encourage everyone in his struggle to live up to his own highest ideal, and strive at the same time to make the ideal as near as possible to the truth. □

Man is like an infinite spring, coiled up in a small box, and that spring is trying to unfold itself; and all the social phenomena that we see are the result of this trying to unfold. □

Teach the masses in the vernaculars, give them ideas; they will get information, but something more is necessary; give them culture. Until you give them that, there can be no permanence in the raised condition of the masses. □

Life is nothing, death is nothing, hunger nothing, cold nothing. Glory unto the Lord—march on, the Lord is our General. Do not look back to see who falls—forward—onward ! Thus and thus we shall go on, brethren. One falls, and another takes up the work. □

A hundred thousand men and women, fired with the zeal of holiness, fortified with eternal faith in the Lord, and nerved to lion's courage by their sympathy for the poor and the fallen and the downtrodden, will go over the length and breadth of the land, preaching the gospel of salvation, the gospel of help, the gospel of social raising up—the gospel of equality. □

The uplift of the women, the awakening of the masses must come first, and then only can any real good come about for the country, for India. □

...arise, awake, for the time is propitious. Already everything is opening out before us. Be bold and fear not. It is only in our Scriptures that this objective is given unto the Lord—Abhih, Abhih. We have to become Abhih, fearless, and our task will be done. Arise, awake, for your country needs this tremendous sacrifice. □

All nations have attained greatness by paying proper respect to women. That country and that nation which do not respect women have never become great, nor will ever be in future. □

...Every one must be ready for it—the conquest of the whole world by India—nothing less than that, and we must all get ready for it, strain every nerve for it.... Up, India, and conquer the world with your spirituality ! Ay, as has been declared on this soil first, love must conquer hatred, hatred cannot conquer itself. □

Women must be put in a position to solve their own problems in their own way. No one can or ought to do this for them. And our Indian women are as capable of doing it as any in the world. □

Religion, the common inheritance, the universal birthright of the race, must be brought free to the door of everybody.

Religion in India must be made as free and as easy of access as is God's air. And this is the kind of work we have to bring about in India, but not by getting up little sects and fighting on points of difference. □

India will be raised, not with the power of the flesh, but with the power of the spirit; not with the flag of destruction, but with the flag of peace and love.... Say not that you are weak. The spirit is omnipotent. □

Unity is knowledge, diversity is ignorance. This knowledge is your birthright.... There never were different religions in the world. We are all destined to have salvation, whether we

will it or not. You have to attain it in the long run and become free, because it is your nature to be free. □

Man is to become divine by realizing the divine. Idols or temples or churches or books are only the supports, the helps, of his spiritual childhood : but on and on he must progress. □

Renunciation, that is the flag, the banner of India, floating over the world, the one undying thought which India sends again and again as a warning to dying races, as a warning to all tyranny, as a warning to wickedness in the world. Ay, Hindus, let not your hold of that banner go. Hold it aloft. Even if you are weak and cannot renounce, do not lower the ideal. □

With five hundred men,...the conquest of India might take fifty years : with as many women, not more than a few weeks. □

...Make way for the life-current of the nation. Take away the blocks that bar the way to the progress of this mighty river, cleanse its path, clear the channel, and out it will rush by its own natural impulse, and the nation will go on careering and progressing. □

The man who wants money is striving for freedom—to get rid of the bondage of poverty. Every action of man is worship, because the idea is to attain to freedom, and all action, directly or indirectly, tends to that. □

Aye, who ever saw money make the man ? It is man that always makes money. The whole world has been made by the energy of man, by the power of enthusiasm, by the power of faith. □

No one was ever really taught by another; each of us has to teach himself. The external teacher offers only the suggestion which rouses the internal teacher to work to understand things. □

The highest ideal is eternal and entire self-abnegation, where there is no 'I', but all is 'Thou'. □

It is not that when a man becomes free, he will stop and become a dead lump; but he will be more active than any other

being, because every other being acts only under compulsion, he alone through freedom. □

Every man should take up his own ideal and endeavour to accomplish it. That is a surer way of progress than taking up other men's ideals which he can never hope to accomplish. □

The first manifest effect of life is expansion. You must expand if you want to live. The moment you have ceased to expand, death is upon you, danger is ahead....Mark my words, it has got to come if this nation lives at all. This question, therefore, is the greatest of the signs of the revival of national life, and through this expansion...our contribution

to the general upheaval of the world, is going out to the external world. □

...freedom is the goal. ...it is freedom alone that is desirable. That is what men struggle after. □

The eyes of the whole world are now turned towards this land of India for spiritual food; and India has to provide it for all the races. Here alone is the best ideal for mankind; and Western Scholars are now striving to understand this ideal which is enshrined in our Sanskrit literature and philosophy, and which has been the characteristic of India all through the ages. □

One may gain political and social independence, but if one is a slave to his

passions and desires, one can not feel pure joy of real freedom. □

Bring all light into the world; light, bring light ! Let light come unto everyone; the task will not be finished till everyone has reached the Lord. Bring light to the poor, and bring more light to the rich, for they require it more than the poor; bring light to the ignorant and more light to the educated for the vanities of the education of our time are tremendous ! Thus bring light to all and leave the rest unto the Lord. □

After so much austerity, I have understood this as the real truth, God is present in every Jiva; there is no other God besides that. 'Who serves Jiva, serves God indeed.' □

Have a tremendous faith in yourselves.... Have that faith, each one of you, in yourself, that eternal power is lodged in every soul, and you will revive the whole of India.... We must enter into the life of every race in India and abroad... This is the time to decide your future—while you possess the energy of youth.... Work; this is the time, for the freshest, the untouched, and unsmelled flowers alone are to be laid at the feet of the Lord. □

It is a tremendous error to feel helpless. Do not seek help from anyone. We are our own help. If we cannot help ourselves, there is none to help us. □

The moment you fear, you are

nobody. It is fear that is the great cause of misery in the world. It is fear that is the greatest of all superstitions. It is fear that is the cause of our woes, and it is fearlessness that brings heaven even in a moment. Therefore 'Arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached.' □

Education is not the amount of information that is put into your brain and runs riot there, undigested, all your life. We must have life-building, man-making, character-making, assimilation of ideas. □

Lay down your comforts, your pleasures, your names, fame or position, nay even your lives, and make a bridge of human chains over which millions

will cross this ocean of life. Bring all the forces of good together. Do not care under what banner you march. Do not care what be your colour—green, blue or red—but mix all the colours up and produce that intense glow of white, the colour of love. Ours is to work. □

In India there are two great evils. Trampling on the women, and grinding the poor through caste restrictions. □

...forget not—that the lower classes, the ignorant, the poor, the illiterate, the cobbler, the sweeper, are thy flesh and blood, thy brothers. Thou brave one, be bold, take courage, be proud that thou art an Indian, and proudly proclaim—'I am an Indian—every Indian is my brother'. Say,

'The ignorant Indian, the poor and destitute Indian, the Brahmin Indian, the pariah Indian, is my brother.' ...Say—brother : 'The soil of India is my highest heaven, the good of India is my good and repeat and pray day and night,...O Thou Mother of Strength, take away my weakness, take away my unmanliness, and make me a man ! □

Build up your character and manifest your Real Nature, the Effulgent, the Resplendent, the Ever Pure, and call it up in everyone that you see.... Our only work is to arouse this knowledge in our fellow-beings. We see that they too are the same pure self. Only they do not know it; we must help them to rouse up their infinite nature. □

The solution is not by bringing down the higher, but by raising the lower up to the level of the higher. And that is the line of work that is found in all our books. □

When the life-blood is strong and pure, no disease germ can live in that body. Our life-blood is spirituality. If it flows clear, if it flows strong and pure and vigorous, everything is right; political, social, any other material defects, even the poverty of the land, will all be cured if that blood is pure. □

Women will work out their own destinies—much better, too, than men can ever do for them. All the mischief to women has come because men undertook to shape the destiny of women. □

I consider that the great national sin is the neglect of the masses, and that is one of the causes of our downfall. No amount of politics would be of any avail until the masses in India are once more well educated, well fed, and well cared for. □

Remember that the nation lives in the cottage. But, alas ! nobody ever did anything for them. ...Can you raise them ? Can you give them back their lost individuality without making them lose their innate spiritual nature ? ...This is to be done and we will do it. □

Look upon every man, woman, and every one as God. You cannot help anyone, you can only serve : serve the children of the Lord, serve the Lord

Himself....Do it only as a worship. I should see God in the poor, and it is for my salvation that I go and worship them. The poor and the miserable are for our salvation, so that we may serve the Lord, coming in the shape of the diseased, coming in the shape of the lunatic, the leper, and the sinner ! □

Inspiration is not filtered out to the world through one channel, however great. Each generation should be inspired afresh. □

If you teach Vedanta to the fisherman, he will say, I am as good a man as you; I am a fisherman, you are a philosopher, but I have the same God in me as you have in you. And that is what we want, no privilege for anyone, equal chances for all. □

Give up the awful disease that is creeping into our national blood, that idea of ridiculing everything, that loss of seriousness. Give that up. Be strong and have...Shraddha, and everything else is bound to follow. □

India must conquer the world, and nothing less than that is my ideal.... We must conquer the world or die. There is no other alternative. The sign of life is expansion; we must go out, expand, show life, or degrade, fester, and die. □

To the women of this country, I would say exactly what I say to the men. Believe in India and in our Indian faith. Be strong and hopeful and unashamed, and remember that with something to

take, Hindus have immeasurably more to give than any other people in the world. □

...Misery and happiness are equal factors in the formation of...character.... In some instances misery is a greater teacher than happiness. ...In the vast majority of cases, it would be found that it was misery that taught more than happiness, it was poverty that taught more than wealth, it was blows that brought out their inner fire more than praise. □

My faith is in the younger generation, the modern generation, out of them will come my workers. They will work out the whole problem, like lions. □

Political greatness or military power is never the mission of our race; it never was, and mark my words, it never will be. But there has been the other mission given to us, which is to conserve, to preserve, to accumulate...all the spiritual energy of the race.... □

...The land where humanity has attained its highest towards gentleness, towards generosity, towards purity, towards calmness, above all, the land of introspection and of Spirituality,—it is India. □

Inactivity should be avoided by all means. Activity always means resistance. Resist all evils, mental and physical; and when you have succeeded

in resisting, then will calmness come. □

...Men should be taught to be practical and physically strong. A dozen of such lions will conquer the world, and not millions of sheep can do so. Secondly, men should not be taught to imitate a personal ideal, however great. □

Suggested Readings

- **Pearls of Wisdom**—Swami Vivekananda
  (*Pages : 224, Price : Rs.35*)
- **Words of Inspiration**—Swami Vivekananda (*Pages : 76, Price : Rs. 15*)
- **My India, the India Eternal**—Swami Vivekananda
  (*Subsidized Edn. : Pages : 272, Price : Rs.30*)
- **Swami Vivekananda : His Life and Message** (*Pages : 80, Price : Rs. 5*)
- **World Thinkers on Ramakrishna-Vivekananda**
  (*Pages : 78, Price : Rs. 20*)
- **Swami Vivekananda : The Friend of All**
  (*Pages 88, Price : Rs. 5*)

'I will give up twenty thousand such bodies to help one man. It is glorious to help even one man.'

—*Sri Ramakrishna*

'I am the mother of the wicked, as I am the mother of the virtuous. Whenever you are in distress, just say to yourself "I have a mother." '

—*Sarada Devi*

'The secret of religion lies not in theories but in practice. To be good and do good—that is the whole of religion.'

—*Swami Vivekananda*



THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION INSTITUTE OF CULTURE

Rs. 2.00



ISBN 81-85843-82-1